

# RWFI E-NOTE MONTHLY

REGIONAL WORKFORCE INITIATIVE • JUNE 2023

## Welcome Message

Greetings NETL RWFI stakeholders,

This month's funding opportunity in focus is the *FY24 Brownfields Jobs Training Grant Program* from the Environmental Protection Agency, with a deadline of August 2, 2023, and involves funding for job training in association with Brownfield activities.

As always, feel free to reach out to us at [NETL.RWFI@netl.doe.gov](mailto:NETL.RWFI@netl.doe.gov) if you have any suggestions for information to present in future E-notes.

Attached to this email is a hyperlinked PDF version of this note. If you would like to unsubscribe, please reply "unsubscribe" to this email.

– Sincerely, The NETL RWFI Team

## Workforce Funding Announcements

### FUNDING SPOTLIGHT



### *FY24 Brownfields Job Training Grants*

#### **Environmental Protection Agency, Deadline, August 2, 2023**

This funding opportunity is made available through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization (OBLR). This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits applications from eligible entities, including nonprofit organizations, to deliver Brownfields Job Training programs that recruit, train, and retain a local, skilled workforce by prioritizing unemployed and under-employed residents to obtain the skills and credentials needed for pathways into full-time employment in various aspects of hazardous and solid waste management and within the larger environmental field, including sustainable cleanup and reuse, and chemical safety. This program is being funded by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Public Law 117-58 (the "Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)").

### *Expanding Artificial Intelligence (AI) Innovation through Capacity Building and Partnerships*

#### **National Science Foundation, Deadline, June 26, 2023**

The National Science Foundation (NSF) and its partners support the continued growth of a broad and diverse interdisciplinary research community for the advancement of AI and AI-powered innovation, providing a unique opportunity to broadly promote the NSF vision and core values, especially inclusion and collaboration. The Expanding AI Innovation through Capacity Building and Partnerships program aims to significantly broaden participation in AI research, education, and workforce development through capacity development projects and through partnerships within the National AI Research Institutes ecosystem.

### *Centers for Research and Innovation in Science, the Environment, and Society (CRISES)*

#### **National Science Foundation, Deadline, June 26, 2023**

The NSF seeks to build research capacity and infrastructure to address complex and compounding national and global crises whose solutions require a human-centered approach. To help generate effective and long-lasting solutions that benefit the entire U.S. public, NSF is providing this funding opportunity to inform possible future CRISES.

### *BIL: Energy Improvement in Rural or Remote Areas (ERA) FOA*

#### **Department of Energy, Deadline, June 28, 2023**

The BIL, authorizes the DOE to invest \$1B in energy improvements in rural or remote areas. DOE's ERA Program will provide financial investment, technical assistance, and other resources to advance clean energy demonstrations and energy solutions that are replicable and scalable.

### *DE-FOA-0003064 Notice of Intent to Issue FOA No. DE-FOA-0002954: Wind Energy Technologies Office Offshore Wind 2023 Centers of Excellence*

#### **Department of Energy, Deadline, June 30, 2023**

The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy seeks to seed one to three university-led Centers of Excellence to catalyze an education, research, and partnership ecosystem to address technology, deployment, and workforce needs for developing U.S. offshore wind industry leadership. The university-led Centers of Excellence funded through this opportunity are intended to accelerate and maximize the effectiveness, reliability, and sustainability of the United States. The ideal institution will have relevant existing credentials, robust diversity and inclusion strategies, and expansive regional partnerships to excite and supercharge the next generation of the renewable energy workforce.

***BIL: Storage, Validation, and Testing (Section 40305):  
Carbon Storage Assurance Facility Enterprise (CarbonSAFE):  
Phases III, III.5, and IV***

**Department of Energy, Deadline, July 6, 2023**

This FOA (DE-FOA-0002711) will support the availability of Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage (CCUS) and CO<sub>2</sub> removal to reach climate goals by building upon these learnings to test, mature, and validate CCUS technologies at commercial-scale. One aspect is the need to improve practices regarding how to efficiently and cost-effectively characterize and permit commercial carbon storage project site(s) ensuring that secure geologic carbon storage is available in diverse regions and settings that will support longer term carbon management goals across the United States. The CarbonSAFE initiative was launched in 2016. Modification 000003 is to add a second closing, add Phase II CarbonSAFE as Area of Interest 4 and associated requirements, revise prerequisite requirements to Phase IV, reduce page numbers for Technical Volume and CarbonSAFE Phases III, III.5, and IV Project Readiness, update Program Policy Factors, update various terms in different sections, and clarify language in various sections. Please see full FOA document for a detailed list of the changes.

***Department of Labor (DOL) Building Pathways to  
Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program***

**Department of Labor, Deadline, July 7, 2023**

The purpose of the DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program is to fund public-private partnerships to develop, strengthen, and scale promising and evidence-based training models in H-1B industries and occupations critical to meeting the goals of the BIL and to maximize the impact of these investments. The United States will need a proficient workforce to fill the good-paying jobs created by this historic investment, and this grant program will train job seekers in advanced manufacturing; information technology; and professional, scientific, and technical services occupations that support renewable energy, transportation, and broadband infrastructure sectors.

***Critical Sector Job Quality Grants***

**Department of Labor, Deadline, July 17, 2023**

The purpose of this demonstration program is to support transformative efforts to improve job quality and availability of good jobs, particularly for the benefit of historically marginalized populations and communities that have experienced barriers to employment in good jobs. The primary focus of these demonstration grants is expanding job quality in the care, climate resiliency and clean energy transition, and hospitality sectors.

***Facilitating a Domestic Critical Minerals (CM) Future:  
Carbon Ore, Rare Earths and Critical Minerals  
(CORE-CM) Initiative***

**Department of Energy, Deadline, July 17, 2023**

This is solely a request for information (RFI) and is not a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA). The DOE is not accepting applications to this RFI. This RFI will seek input from industry members, investors, developers, academia, research laboratories, government agencies, tribal governments, potentially impacted communities and other stakeholders to advance the use of unconventional and

secondary feedstocks to produce rare earth elements (REEs), CMs and novel high-value, nonfuel carbon-based products, which are needed to ensure U.S. energy, economic and national security. This RFI supports the CORE-CM Initiative.

***Carbon Management***

**Department of Energy, Deadline, July 18, 2023**

This FOA aims to expand the DOE's Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management (FECM) carbon management portfolio through support for research and development projects in the programmatic areas of Point Source Carbon Capture and Carbon Storage.

***Improving Undergraduate STEM Education (IUSE: EDU)***

**National Science Foundation, Deadline July 19, 2023**

The NSF plays a leadership role in developing and implementing efforts to enhance and improve STEM education in the United States. Through the NSF IUSE: EDU initiative, the agency continues to make a substantial commitment to the highest caliber undergraduate STEM education through a Foundation-wide framework of investments. The IUSE: EDU is a core NSF STEM education program that seeks to promote novel, creative, and transformative approaches to generating and using new knowledge about STEM teaching and learning to improve STEM education for undergraduate students. The program is open to application from all institutions of higher education and associated organizations.

***FY23 Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and  
Modernization Grant***

**Department of Transportation, Deadline, July 24, 2023**

The grant funding is to be made available to a municipality or community owned utility (not including for-profit entities) to repair, rehabilitate, or replace its natural gas distribution pipeline systems or portions thereof or to acquire equipment to reduce incidents and fatalities and to avoid economic losses.

***This is a Notice of Intent to Issue a FOA No.: DE-  
FOA-0003036 "Energy Storage Demonstration  
and Validation"***

**Department of Energy, Deadline, July 31, 2023**

The DOE Office of Electricity intends to issue FOA number DEFOA0003036 titled Energy Storage Demonstration and Validation. This Notice of Intent to Issue is for informational purposes only; the DOE is not seeking comments on the information in this notice and applications are not being accepted at this time. Any information contained in this notice is subject to change. The anticipated FOA will address FY23 Congressional Direction, which directs OE to pursue a competitive pilot demonstration grant program, as authorized in section 3201 of the Energy Act of 2020, for energy storage projects that are U.S.-controlled, U.S.-made, and North American sourced and supplied. The Department is directed to include in this program large scale commercial development and deployment of long cycle life, lithium-grid scale batteries and their components.

*RFI on Barriers to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in applying for Nuclear Forensics Research Awards (NFRAs)*

**Department of Homeland Security, Deadline, July 31, 2023**

The intent of this RFI is to provide an opportunity for HBCUs to share information on the barriers encountered in applying to Notice of Funding Opportunity announcements for NFRAs under the National Nuclear Forensics Expertise Development Program. Responses to this RFI will help the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office understand challenges and improvements the Department of Homeland Security can make in future NFRA award opportunities that will improve participation from HBCUs. This is an RFI only. This notice does not constitute a commitment by the government. Providing a response to this request will not give any advantage to any organization in any subsequent Notice of Funding Opportunity. All information submitted in response to this announcement is voluntary, and the government will not pay for information requested nor will it compensate any respondent for any cost incurred in developing information provided to the government.

*BIL: Industrial Assessment Center (IAC) Program: IACs at Trade Schools, Community Colleges, and Union Training Programs; and Building Training and Assessment Centers (BTAC) Program and FOA Description*

**Department of Energy, Deadline, July 31, 2023**

The Office of Manufacturing and Energy Supply Chains and Office of State and Community Energy Programs is issuing this FOA to establish new IACs at community colleges, trade schools, and union training programs, as well as to create new BTACs at institutions of higher education, including Tribal colleges and universities. The new IACs and BTACs that will be created with this funding will build upon the demonstrated success of applied learning environments and hands-on training approaches of existing IACs. The IACs also will draw on the unique strengths, geographic reach, and faculty/student composition of trade schools, community colleges, union training programs, and other institutions of higher education. The new IACs will focus on high-quality skilled trades job pathways in fields such as industrial electrician, energy management, renewable energy, and advanced manufacturing, while providing hands-on support to small and medium manufacturers. The new BTACs will expand these benefits to commercial and institutional buildings to help lower utility costs and allow companies to reinvest in businesses, employees, and community services. BTACs will train students and workers as engineers, architects, building scientists, building energy permitting and enforcement officials, and building technicians in energy-efficient design and operation.

*BIL: Energy Improvement in Rural or Remote Areas FOA*

**Department of Energy, Deadline, August 2, 2023**

The BIL authorizes DOE to invest \$1B in energy improvements in rural or remote areas. DOE's Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas (ERA) Program will provide financial investment, technical assistance, and other resources to advance clean energy demonstrations and energy solutions that are replicable and scalable. ERA aims to fund clean energy projects with three specific goals.

*2023 FOA for Energy Improvements at Nonprofits—BIL: Renew America's Nonprofits*

**Department of Energy, Deadline, August 3, 2023**

The Office of State and Community Energy Programs is issuing this FOA, Renew America's Nonprofits. Awards made under this FOA will be funded, in whole or in part, with funds appropriated by the BIL. This FOA seeks applications that address energy efficiency upgrades, which enable scalable impacts, create innovative partnerships, and leverage funding and economies of scale. As part of and in addition to upgrading and modernizing infrastructure, DOE's BIL investments will support efforts to build a clean and equitable energy economy that achieves a zero-carbon electricity system by 2035, and to put the United States on a path to achieve net-zero emissions economy-wide by no later than 2050 to benefit all Americans.

*Notice of Intent to Issue Funding Opportunity Announcement No. DE-FOA-0002912 for BIL, Section 40551: Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) Enhancement & Innovation*

**Department of Energy, Deadline August 18, 2023**

The DOE Office of State and Community Energy Programs, on behalf of the WAP, intends to issue a \$25M FOA entitled "BIL WAP Enhancement & Innovation," in support of section 40551 of the BIL.

*Wind Energy Technologies Office Offshore Wind 2023 Centers of Excellence FOA*

**Department of Energy, Deadline, August 28, 2023**

The university-led Centers of Excellence funded through this opportunity are intended to accelerate and maximize the effectiveness, reliability, and sustainability of U.S. offshore wind deployment and operation through partnership with industry participants, including wind project developers and technology manufacturers; other institutions of higher education; other research institutions, such as national laboratories, non-governmental organizations, tribes, and state and local-level governments.

*Improving Undergraduate STEM Education: Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI)*

**National Science Foundation, Deadline, August 28, 2023**

The goals of the HSI program are to enhance the quality of undergraduate STEM education and to increase the recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of students pursuing associate's or baccalaureate degrees in STEM. Achieving these, given the diverse nature and context of the HSIs, requires additional strategies that support building capacity at HSIs through innovative approaches: to incentivize institutional and community transformation; and to promote fundamental research on engaged student learning, about what it takes to diversify and increase participation in STEM effectively, and that improves our understanding of how to build institutional capacity at HSIs.



## BIL: Clean Energy Demonstration Program on Current and Former Mine Land Funding Opportunity Announcement

Department of Energy, Deadline, August 31, 2023

The DOE's Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations (OCED) is issuing this FOA to support clean energy demonstration projects on current and/or former mine lands. Awards made under this FOA will be funded, in whole or in part, with funds appropriated by the BIL. As part of and in addition to upgrading and modernizing infrastructure, DOE's BIL investments will support efforts to build a clean and equitable energy economy that achieves a zero-carbon electricity system by 2035 and to put the United States on a path to achieve net-zero emissions economy-wide by no later than 2050 to benefit all Americans.



### NETL Welcomes 54 Summer Research Associates

Summer research associates arrived at NETL sites June 5, 2023, and have begun collaborating with the Lab's scientists, engineers and other professionals to gain direct experience in their fields and contribute to innovative projects to meet the nation's energy needs. "NETL's research associates are selected from an elite pool of candidates and represent the best and brightest in their fields," said NETL Director Brian Anderson. "We are pleased they will be joining us as they contribute to projects and acquire experience to serve as the next generation of innovators."



### NETL Develops Pipeline Route Planning Database to Guide CO<sub>2</sub> Transport Decisions

Strategically planning safe and sustainable routes for transportation of CO<sub>2</sub> from where it is captured to where it can be stored underground or converted into other products is a critical priority in achieving a greenhouse gas-neutral economy by 2050. NETL has responded to that challenge by creating an expansive and accessible Carbon Capture and Storage Pipeline Route Planning Database to guide routing decisions and increase transportation safety.

## NETL News



### U.S. DOE Memo Enhances Energy Research Data Access

Recognizing the importance of collaborative assets for energy-related research needs, the DOE has taken steps to ensure a permanent place for researchers around the world to access research data.



### NETL Environmental Engineer Wins Prestigious Flemming Award

NETL's Natalie Pekney, Ph.D., an environmental engineer leading research to mitigate methane emissions from abandoned oil and gas wells, has been named the recipient of a 2022 Arthur S. Flemming Award, one of the nation's top honors presented to federal employees.



### *NETL Publishes New Baseline Study Report on the Flexibility Attributes of Commercial Natural Gas Power Generation Technologies*

To address the data needs of energy system designers and to serve as a baseline for research and development, NETL has carried out a study to characterize the flexibility attributes—both performance and cost—of nine common commercial natural gas-fueled electricity generating units.



### *NETL Supports Liftoff of Airborne Technology to Monitor Carbon Storage Sites*

A team led by NETL researchers recently launched airborne technology at a commercial-scale CO<sub>2</sub> geologic storage site in Mississippi to complete a first-of-its-kind electromagnetic survey and collect data needed to monitor greenhouse gas sequestered in the subsurface.



### *On the Road Again, NETL Visits Side-by-Side Point Source Carbon Capture Projects*

Innovative technologies to enable the U.S. chemical industry to reduce carbon emissions and help the nation achieve a 100% clean electricity sector by 2035 are moving forward in two side-by-side projects supported with NETL expertise near Houston, TX.



### *DOE Announces \$45M for Carbon Capture, Transport and Storage to Reduce Carbon Pollution*

The DOE's FECM and NETL announced up to \$45.5M in funding available to advance CO<sub>2</sub> capture technologies and help establish the foundation for a successful carbon transport and storage industry in the United States.



### *NETL Goes Deep to Develop New Biocatalysts for Carbon Conversion*

NETL researchers are growing versatile biocatalysts using microbes from a coalbed methane (CBM) well to convert industrial CO<sub>2</sub> wastes and other single-carbon compounds into useful chemicals to manufacture biofuel, food additives and other high-value products while reducing emissions of greenhouse gas.

## Reports and Resources



### *Jobs, Emissions, and Economic Growth—What the Inflation Reduction Act Means for Working Families*

#### Energy Futures Initiative

A diverse workforce provides the potential for innovation by leveraging different backgrounds, experiences, and points of view. Innovation and creativity, along with technical skills relying on expertise in STEM, contribute to a robust STEM enterprise. Furthermore, STEM workers have higher median earnings and lower rates of unemployment compared with non-STEM workers. This report provides high-level



insights from multiple data sources into the diversity of the STEM workforce in the United States.

### LinkedIn June Workforce Report

#### LinkedIn

- **Hiring sees an uptick but it's too early to say we're on the path to recovery:** Nationally, across all industries, hiring increased 3.5% in May compared to April but is still down 21.8% year-over-year. After months of declines, we've started to see a small uptick in hiring over the last few months. However, it's still too early to tell whether we're on the verge of a more robust, sustainable recovery or if the declines will resume.
- **Tech, Info & Media industry sees slight rebound in hiring but is still down substantially:** Hiring increased in 16 of 20 industries in May, an increase from 7 last month. The strongest industries month-over-month were Hospitals & Healthcare (10.2%), Manufacturing (9.3%), and Construction (9.2%). Surprisingly, the Tech, Information & Media industry rebounded by 8.0% over the last month, which may indicate this industry has approached its bottom for hiring declines. Since late Fall (November 2022) – as we were in the thick of the ongoing hiring declines – the strongest industries for hiring have been Hospitals & Healthcare (+7.2%), Government Administration (+5.6%), and Construction (+3.1%). Over the same 6-month period, the weakest industries have been Wholesale (-19.9%), Tech, Information & Media (-13.7%), and Administrative & Support Services (-12.6%).
- **Metros see renewed hiring gains:** 19 of the 20 metro areas we track regularly experienced a hiring increase in May, up from 4 last month. The strongest metro areas were Austin (14.2%), the San Francisco Bay Area (12.1%), and Houston (10.5%). And since last Fall (November 2022), the strongest metro areas for hiring have been Miami/Ft. Lauderdale (2.3%), Boston (1.8%), and Houston (1.8%). The metro areas that have continued to struggle since last Fall have been St. Louis (-15.7%), Chicago (-8.0%), and Nashville (-7.4%).
- **Hiring:** The LinkedIn hiring rate is a measure of hires divided by LinkedIn membership. Nationally, across all industries, hiring in the U.S. was 3.5% higher in May 2023 compared to last month April 2023. National hiring was 21.8% lower in May 2023 compared to last year May 2022.

## DOE STEM Rising



### Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$13.5M Investment to Equitably Grow Solar Energy Workforce

Funding from President Biden's Investing in America Agenda Will Support Creation of Quality, Clean Energy Careers, and Supercharge America's Clean Energy Future. As part of President Biden's Investing in America *agenda*, the DOE announced 12 projects, whose work will span more than 13 states, selected for negotiation to launch training partnerships that expand the solar energy workforce in underserved and underrepresented communities, as well as create career pathways with thousands of good-paying jobs.

### DOE's Agile BioFoundry Selects Three Projects in Partnership with Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) STEM Research & Development Consortium

The DOE *Bioenergy Technologies Office* awarded \$1M in funding to three projects at MSIs to accelerate U.S. biomanufacturing sector growth. In partnership with the *MSI STEM Research & Development Consortium*, *Agile BioFoundry* will fund these research projects to support the advancement of their technologies and position the awardees to more fully leverage the consortium's technical capabilities in future projects.

### Ohio State University (OSU) & Wilberforce University Team Claims Top Spot in Year One of the EcoCAR Electric Vehicle (EV) Challenge

OSU & Wilberforce University Team has been named the winner of Year One of the EcoCAR EV Challenge, taking the lead in the four-year collegiate engineering competition. West Virginia University took second place and University of Alabama finished third in the judged competition, which was held from May 21–26, 2023, in Orlando, FL.

### First Historically Black University Joins Board at National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Howard University, one of the nation's leading HBCUs, became the first HBCU to join the DOE's National Renewable Energy Laboratory governing alliance board of directors, which consists of leaders from universities with top-tier STEM programs. This partnership will help ensure that more students from historically disadvantaged communities can enjoy fulfilling careers that shape the future of renewable energy.

## ABOUT NETL



**NETL**, owned and operated by DOE, is one of the Department's 17 National Laboratories. NETL supports DOE's mission to advance the national, economic, and energy security of the United States.

1450 Queen Avenue SW  
Albany, OR 97321-2198  
541-967-5892

3610 Collins Ferry Road  
P.O. Box 880  
Morgantown, WV 26507-0880  
304-285-4764

626 Cochran's Mill Road  
P.O. Box 10940  
Pittsburgh, PA 15236-0940  
412-386-4687

Program staff are also located in  
Houston, Texas and Anchorage, Alaska

**WEBSITE:** [www.netl.doe.gov](http://www.netl.doe.gov)

## CONTACTS

**Anthony Armaly**  
NETL RWFI Federal Coordinator  
412-386-6040  
[Anthony.Armaly@netl.doe.gov](mailto:Anthony.Armaly@netl.doe.gov)

**Kirk Gerdes**  
Regional Workforce Initiative Coordinator  
304-285-4342  
[Kirk.Gerdes@netl.doe.gov](mailto:Kirk.Gerdes@netl.doe.gov)

**Mike Knaggs**  
Associate Director of Partnerships  
304-285-4926  
[Michael.Knaggs@netl.doe.gov](mailto:Michael.Knaggs@netl.doe.gov)

**Matthew Garcia**  
Regional Workforce Initiative Consultant  
956-314-0645  
[Matthew.Garcia@netl.doe.gov](mailto:Matthew.Garcia@netl.doe.gov)

